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Conference Abstract

New Developments and Future Vision of the Nomenclatural Database IPNI and the Taxonomic Database WCVP

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Abstract

IPNI (International Plant Names Index) has been providing nomenclatural data in one form or another for the past 138 years. Over the past decade, great progress has been made in improving the data and making it accessible via a new website. We will be showcasing the new features that have been added to the website, in particular the latest addition, name registration. While obligatory name registration has already been in place for fungi for a decade, we will be highlighting the opportunities it will bring to vascular plant sciences and our ever-increasing pace of data needs. Name registration will lighten the burden of finding newly published names and entering them into the IPNI database, allowing the IPNI curation team to focus on other aspects that have been left behind, like data standardisation. We will also be revisiting some of the longstanding features of IPNI like the LSID (Life Sciences Identifier), which has been used on the IPNI website since its launch in the year 2000, even though new projects still continue to invent their own identifiers. We will look into why this is and how these can improve the efficiency of curating databases that contain plant names, including WFO (World Flora Online).

For the past 34 years, the IPNI data have been the basis for the taxonomic database, WCVP (World Checklist of Vascular Plants), which records both synonymy and biogeography of vascular plants. Since 2014, both these datasets are curated as part of the same team

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resulting in greater coordination and data improvements on both sides. WCSP contains some 200,000 names that are not in IPNI and the process has now started to add them to IPNI. IPNI LSIDs have also been added to WCVP, increasing the opportunities of linking to other programmes, like WFO. A widespread utilisation of IPNI LSIDS would offer the opportunity to combine different global plant checklists, allowing users to choose under which taxonomy they want to see data and forego the requirement for one globally agreed taxonomy. However, IPNI and WCVP are still stand-alone legacy database systems, which limit their functionality in a continually changing landscape of user needs.

Although half of the WCVP data have been reviewed by experts, more integrated access is needed to speed up the review of the other half and continued direct access by these expert groups, including some of the TENs (Taxonomic Expert Networks) established for WFO. We will investigate the possible synergies that may be possible by combining the day-to-day grind of WCVP data management and expert input.

Keywords

IPNI, WCVP, nomenclature, taxonomy, plant names

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